With reference to **FIGURE 7J**, the user has entered fourteen defined object attributes. Defined object attribute allows a person to define the relevant attributes associated with each type of defined object. Here you need to list all attributes that you might want to override at run-time for any object. In Forms, for items, you might want to manipulate Prompt, Visual Attribute and Current Record Visual Attribute. In this particular example, the first one is a visual attribute for a canvas, and it is given explicitly in the description field.

With reference to **FIGURE 7K**, the user has entered many object values.

System defines all of the programs in the system and the objects in these programs that can be manipulated. For example, the Payroll System would have several forms with associated blocks, items, help messages, etc. Everything associated with the system is stored here.

Those of ordinary skill in the art will recognize that the embodiments just described merely illustrate the principles of the present invention. Many modifications may be made thereto without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as set forth in the following claims.

We claim:

1. A method of defining and storing customization information of computer applications, in a single user or multiuser environment, comprising the steps of:

    a) creating a tool by specifying a name and a description of the software development product and storing the name and the description of the software development product in a database table called Tool;

b) creating a plurality of defined objects, by specifying for each of the plurality of defined objects a name, a description, and a hierarchical structure, and storing the name, the description and the hierarchical structure of the plurality of defined objects in a database table called Def_Obj;

c) defining a system, by specifying a name, a password, a schema, a version number, and a description, and storing the name, the password, the schema, the version number and the description of the system in a database table called Systm;

d) defining a valid tool, by specifying which tool was used in developing the system and storing the valid tool in a database table called Valid_Tool;

e) defining an object, by specifying a particular system with a name Systm_ID, a particular defined object with a name Def_Obj_ID, a name, a description, and a hierarchical structure with a name Obj_ID_RFK, and storing the object in a database table called Obj;

f) defining a plurality of abstract objects, by specifying for each of the plurality of abstract objects a name, a description, an associated system, and the associated defined objects, and storing the name, the description, the associated system and the associated defined object for each of the plurality of abstract objects in a database table called Abstract Object;

g) defining a language, by specifying a name and a description and storing the name and the description of the language in a database table called Lang

h) defining a label set, by specifying a particular system, a particular language, a name, and a description and storing the language, the name, and the description of the label set in a database table called Label_Set;

i) defining a domain, by specifying a name, a default text, a default number, a default date, a data type, a length, a maximum, a minimum, a precision, a description, a valid rule, and a type of domain, and storing the name, the default text, the default number, the default date, the data type, the length, the maximum, the minimum, the precision, the description of the domain, the valid rule and the type of domain in a database table called Domain;

j) defining a plurality of defined object attributes, by specifying for each of the plurality of defined objects a particular domain, a particular defined object, a name and a description, and storing the domain, the particular defined object , the name and the description of each of the plurality of the defined object attributes in a database table called Def_Obj_Attr; and

k) defining a value of the object, by specifying either a particular object or a defined object or abstract object, a label set, defined object attributes, and either numerical or textual values, and storing the particular object or the defined object or the abstract object, the label set, the defined object attributes, the numerical value or the textual values of the value of the object in a database table called Obj_Value.

2. The method of Claim 1 wherein the defining and storing of information in steps a through k therein inclusive, is used to customize a computer application for a particular language to be selected by a user.

3. The method of Claim 1 wherein the defining and storing of information in steps a through k therein inclusive, is used to customize a computer application to provide context-sensitive or personalized error messages.

4. The method of Claim 1 wherein the defining and storing of information in steps a through k therein inclusive, is used to customize a computer application to provide context-sensitive or personalized help messages.

5. The method of Claim 1 wherein the defining and storing of information in steps a through k therein inclusive, is used to customize a computer application to provide field-level security.

6. The method of Claim 1 wherein the defining and storing of information in steps a through k therein inclusive, is used to customize a computer application to support client preferences, such as client-specific display preferences.